

THE PROCESS OF EVANGELISM

The goal of evangelism is the initiation of a conversion reaction within a specific symbol context. The task of functional religion is to sustain the process reached at the end of the conversion reaction.

The task of pre-evangelism has to do with the refinement of the process of idealisation, projection and denial associated with the primal object/environment. With regards to the intrapersonal field or self, the introjected primal environment is raised to consciousness in its idealised bad form, whereas the introjected idealised good primal environment is denied. The self is therefore perceived as bad, having no health in it, the domain of sin and death and burdened with guilt.

With regard to the projected and externalised primal environment the task of pre-evangelism is the obverse, namely to reify and raise to consciousness the absolute goodness, love, trust, purity, resourcefulness and graciousness of the idealised good primal environment while denying the externalised, idealised primal bad environment. In so far as awareness of the latter cannot be completely repressed, it is demonstrated to be impotent in the presence of, and conquered by, the power of the idealised good primal environment (in Kleinian terms the life instinct predominates over the death instinct environmentally, while death instinct dominates over life instinct intrapersonally).

In so far as this process is accomplished, the possibility for conversion reaction is open. The subject, aware of internal badness in the presence of external goodness, hungers, thirsts, knocks, seeks to enter, tries to incorporate, receives, eats, drinks, etc. so internalising the good primal environment, while projecting outwards, and subsequently denying, the internalised, idealised bad primal environment (hence the guilt-bearing efficiency of the sacrificial mediator between God and Man). Man is ransomed, redeemed, forgiven, freed, cleansed etc. as a result.

The conversion process results in the assurance of an internalised good self, not earned but received by introjection from the experienced, externalised good environment. Death has no more dominion.

Functional religion with its oscillation process represents a reinforcement of the conversion dynamic. Goodness is again reified externally, internal badness is raised back to consciousness, reprojected out onto its carrier and goodness re-introjected in its place. Functional religion therefore represents the preservation of one pole of the paranoid-schizoid defences so sustaining the societal defences against the re-emergence of primal anxiety. In particular it facilitates repression of the anarchic/suicidal and retaliatory aspect of primal impingement and loss.

The resulting position rules out the possibility of individual integration and wholeness, since both good and bad idealised aspects of the primal environment are denied, repressed and exported, leaving the persona an empty shell to be filled by re-introjected phantasies from the idealised good primal environment, reified in symbol form onto the Godhead and introjected primarily in worship.

Not only is personal integration blocked by this position but reality orientation to a given environment is also inhibited. The idealised bad persecutory and retaliatory aspects of the environment are denied, appropriate anxieties are repressed and irresponsible passive dependency on an unlimited, ever-resourceful environment is encouraged. The disastrous consequences of such phantasy-dominated relationship with a real world become clearer as the limits to growth of the world human/food/energy/resource cycle are reached. It would appear that effective international management of global survival within the realities of a world which, while potentially supportive is also potentially persecutory, requires the demolishing of the primitive anxiety defences of the world religious systems and a process of reality-oriented integration at every level of the world community.

If the task of religious systems is to sustain by symbol, myth and ritual the defences against primal chaos and persecution then the agenda proposed is essentially irreligious. The process envisaged runs counter to every current religious system in that it requires the heightening of insight and understanding and the enhancement of integration, whereas current religious process represses insight and understanding and facilitates splitting and projection.

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